

Psalm 93:1–5 The Throne Above the Tumult

For the last three months it has felt like things are spinning out of control. BLM, Antifa, the CHOP zone in Seattle, the burning, looting, and pillaging, coupled with the unwillingness of the authorities to enforce the rule of law has been unsettling.

Throw in the Covid 19 pandemic, followed by the lockdown, and we have a prescription for anxiety. Our confidence in the future has been shaken.

Rational people are fearful.

Last week we learned that Psalm 46 is an antidote. This week we add Psalm 93. The main idea is simple. It is in the first verse **The Lord Reigns! There is a throne above the tumult.**

“The Lord Reigns” is a short, sweet, powerful three-word expression. It only occurs 5 times in scripture.” Two are duplicates.

- 1 The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty;
the LORD is robed; he has put on strength as his belt.
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.
- 2 Your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.
- 3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD,
the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their roaring.
- 4 Mightier than the thunders of many waters,
mightier than the waves of the sea,
the LORD on high is mighty!
- 5 Your decrees are very trustworthy;
holiness befits your house,
O LORD, forevermore.

Ps 93 breaks down into four sections: the attributes of Gods reign, the opposition to Gods reign, the invincibility of Gods reign, and the response to Gods reign.

A. VS 1-2 ATTRIBUTES OF GOD’S REIGN

- 1 The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty;
the LORD is robed; he has put on strength as his belt.
Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.
- 2 Your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.

The attributes in this passage are two-fold: Majesty, and Authority.

First, he is “*Robed in Majesty*”

What is majesty? Synonyms are authority, dignity, stateliness, pomp, solemnity, grandeur. Dignity of bearing. For some royals it is a title, I.e. to the Queen of England, “your majesty.”

After their deliverance through the Red Sea Miriam celebrated with dance describing God as

“Majestic in holiness.” (Ex 15).

Psalm 8 asks, “How majestic is your name?”

Ps 104:1 concludes that God is “Clothed with splendor and majesty; covering yourself with light as with a garment.”

1 Tim 6:16, “He dwells in unapproachable light.”

Peter sums it up when he describes Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration as the “Majestic Glory” 2 Pet. 1:17.

John Murray writes,

“The controlling sense of the majesty and holiness of God and the profound reverence which this apprehension elicits constitute the essence of the fear of God.”¹

Ray Ortlund adds,

“Beholding God in his exalted majesty and seeing ourselves in our sinful vileness, here in this moment of insight, humility—that is to say, realism—is reborn in our hearts.”²

Second, Authority Vs 2b “*He has put on strength as his belt.*” and “*Your Throne is established from of old. You are from Everlasting*”

The “establishment” of God’s throne speaks of Permanence. Stability. Authority. Thrones are places where kings sit. God is a king. Whoever sits on the throne has the power to command. God reigns is eternal. He has girded himself with strength.

Because God’s throne is eternal, unshakable, the earth is also unshakable.

Summary of Vs 1-2. 1st God is majestic. “He dwells in unapproachable light.” 2nd He is a king. He sits on an ancient, eternal, throne. He is omnipotent, stable, and unchanging.

“The Lord Reigns!” He sits on the throne that is above the turmoil.

Application:

¹ VanDrunen, David. God’s Glory Alone---The Majestic Heart of Christian Faith and Life (The Five Solas Series) (p. 137). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

² Ray Ortlund Jr. *When God Comes to Church*, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 2000), pg 200

Gods “Kingship” is the heart of the Gospel. Jesus came preaching this Good News. “*The kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*” We preach grace so much that we often forget this.

This begs the question. Have you settled the issue of authority?

If you haven’t are you really a citizen of God’s Kingdom?

Second, are you extending his reign by evangelizing? Of the four statements “the Lord reigns,” the second exhorts us to evangelism.

“Psalm 96:10 “Say among the nations, ‘The LORD reigns!’”

Are we doing this? The church is losing ground. Our numbers in North America are shrinking. Yet we seem to think we can evangelize without supernatural aid. But we can’t. Therefore, we need revival.

Are you praying for Revival?

Third, are you resting in God’s reign? Rest requires a deep-settled conviction about two truths—1st God’s sovereignty is exhaustive and 2nd his goodness is infinite.

B. VS 3 OPPOSITION TO HIS REIGN

³ The floods have lifted up, O LORD,
the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their roaring.

This flood language in the OT is usually symbolic speech. The language of roaring floods can refer to three things.

1. God’s judgments. Think Noah’s Flood
2. Personal sorrow and pain. Ps 42:7 “*Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls: all you breakers and waves have gone over me.*”
3. The nations in turmoil. Isa 17:12 “*Ah, the thunder of many peoples; they thunder like the thundering of the sea! Ah, the roar of nations; they roar like the roaring of mighty waters!*”

The roaring floods in this passage refers to #3, the nations frothed up in the restlessness of selfish ambition, fear, lust, and rebellion against God.

These “floods” “*lift up their voice*” against God’s truth and God’s authority. Controlled by the Father of Lies, they imitate him. They lie and deceive.

This should not surprise us. Jesus said, “They hated me without cause.”

A recent protestor representing an organization titled, undojesus.org, carried a sign that sums it up, “*If Jesus returns, kill him again.*”

What does the uplifted voice of the roaring floods sound like today?

It sounds like the sexual revolution. “Make love not war,” Herbert Marcuse.

It sounds like gender feminism. “A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle.”

Gloria Steinem.

It sounds like the abortion of 50 million babies, sacrificed to the selfish ambition of their mothers, and promoted by Planned Parenthood.

It sounds like the LGBTQ revolution—invent your own gender.

It sounds like cancel culture, a Herbert Marcuse inspired hatred of free speech. It began with his 1968 essay *Repressive Tolerance* suggesting that free speech is merely a form of repression.

The floods roar from BLM.

It roars from ANTIFA.

It roars from our colleges and universities.

It roars from the secular media.

It is the sound of anarchy in downtown Seattle, Portland, and Chicago.

It is the sound of liberal mayors and governors that refuse to enforce the rule of law.

(Mobs in the streets can meet to destroy, but not churches).

It is the sound of inappropriate white guilt.

It is the sound of hatred for America.

It sounds like hatred for male authority.

It sounds like hatred for the nuclear family.

It is the hatred of capitalism, and the love of insurrection.

“The floods have lifted up their voice...their roaring.”

We’ve discussed the attributes of Gods reign, the Opposition to his reign...

C. VS 4 THE INVINCIBILITY OF GOD’S REIGN

⁴ Mightier than the thunders of many waters,
mightier than the waves of the sea,
the LORD on high is mighty!

How does the conflict with the voice of the uplifted floods end?

God wins! God reigns! God sits on a throne, and his throne is above the flood. It cannot touch him. He is omnipotent. No weapon formed against him can stand. The “flood” cannot even “roar” without his permission. Three times in Daniel 4-5 this thought is repeated.

The Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men. (Daniel 4:17).

Revelation 11:15 describes his ultimate victory

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.””

The conflict ends with God on his eternal throne, the throne that is above the flood, rendering final judgment.

(Acts 17:31) "God has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

This is why we should “*say among the nations. The Lord reigns*” (Ps. 96).

As we said last week, although God’s ultimate victory is ultimate, it does not mean an easy life. God allows evil for his sovereign purposes. No evil can gain influence without his permission.

The Devil is having his way with America right now, but that is only because God is allowing it. Satan is like a dog on a leash.

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

Job 1:12 And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

The Lord reigns over the Devil! He sits on the throne that is above the flood!

So far we have discussed the attributes of his reign, the opposition to his reign, and the Invincibility of his reign.

D. VS 5 THE RESPONSE TO GOD’S REIGN

- 5 Your decrees are very trustworthy;
holiness befits your house,
O LORD, forevermore.

Other translations reads “holiness adorns or is the beauty of your house”

This verse implies two truths about God. He is faithful, and he is holy. That implies two responses from us: trust God’s word, and grow in holiness.

1st His word/decrees/laws are trustworthy. That is crucial because God rules by his word.

Psalm 46:5 “He utters his voice. The earth melts.”

Therefore, the first proper response to God’s reign is faith/trust.

Last week Psalm 46 exhorted us to take refuge in God.

Again, how do we take refuge in God? Faith/trust! No matter our circumstances, we believe his word. No matter our circumstances we hide in his promises. Faith is the first response to God's reign.

2nd God is infinitely holy. "*Holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.*" God's majesty, (Vs 1) and God's holiness (Vs 5) are inseparably linked.

Welch: "His majesty, is a holy majesty."³

Motyer: "Transcendent holiness is the total truth about God...(It is) his unapproachable and unique moral majesty."⁴

God's holiness is his majesty. Miriam rejoiced that he was, "Majestic in holiness."

But what about you and I? Since the "beauty of God's house is his holiness" will the unholy get in? Would the unholy want to get in?

Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

Heb 12:14 "Strive for...the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."

I doesn't say perfect people. It says holy people.

Ultimately, the cross unveils this Psalm.

"The Lord reigns!" But the cross displays the nature of God's reign.

He is not a despot. He's not like Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mao, etc. He won't use you for his benefit.

His throne is a cross. He is a crucified King. He will use himself up to benefit you. It is your happiness at his expense. He dies that we might live. He becomes poor that we might become rich. He suffers God's wrath so that we can experience God's pleasure. Jesus suffers God's rejection so that we can experience his love. He suffers hell that you and I might go to heaven.

The cross displays the holy majesty of God's reign. God's holiness appear in his total lack of selfishness. He is not like us.

God reigns! His hatred of sin is so profound, his justice so exquisite, and his love so infinite, that only the death of a divine being, God's Son, could atone for our sin.

Yes! He is majestic in holiness, and his GRACE is the pinnacle of his holiness. The depths of Gods grace is the depths of his holy majesty.

³ David Wells, *The Courage to be Protestant*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2008), pg 129

⁴J. Alec Motyer, *Commentary on Isaiah 6:3*

Conclusion: The Lord reigns! He sits on a throne. His throne is above the roaring of the flood/tumult. Ultimately those who see the majesty of his reign at the cross respond with both joy and trembling.

I said when we started that the expression, “The Lord Reigns” appears exactly five times in the Bible, and two are identical. So “the Lord reigns” expresses four concepts. We already examined two—

“The Lord reigns. He is robed in majesty.” Ps 93

“Say among the nations—The Lord Reigns” Ps 96.

The other two describe how God wants us to respond to the reign of our crucified King, who sits above the flood, whose throne is a cross, and whose majesty is his holiness.

Psalm 99:1 “The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble!”

Psalm 97:1 “The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice.”

Psalm 2:10-11 “Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.”

DeYoung: “Shallow Christianity will not last in the coming generation, and it will not grow. Cultural Christianity is fading. The church in the twenty-first century must go big on truth or go home.”